

English Church Catechism
AN
ANSWER

TO THE

REMARKS

UPON

Dr. Clarke's EXPOSITION

OF THE

Church - Catechism.

L O N D O N :

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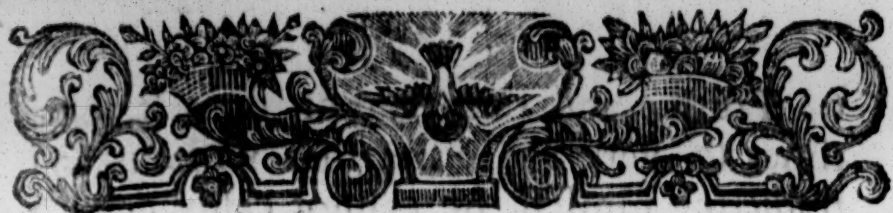


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A N
ANSWER
TO THE
REMARKS, &c.



THE Author of the Remarks upon Dr. *Clarke's* Exposition of the Church-Catechism having charged Dr. *Clarke* with "foul
" play in wresting the words
" and perverting the meaning" of the Catechism, with "corrupting the sincere
" Milk, and perverting the Fountains", with "either disguising the Sense, or e- p. 3.
" luding the Truths wrapped up in" the baptismal Creed, it cannot be improper distinctly to consider this Charge. The only difficulty seems to be to pitch upon some Rule by which we may try this cause. But since Dr. *Clarke* constantly allows the Scripture to be the Rule and Test

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p. 20.

p. 29.

of Truth; and this Author does it sometimes so very expressly, that without contradicting himself he cannot easily deny it, I think I may without Injustice lay claim to such concessions. I readily own, that the Remarker sometimes declines this Test: he contends for adding to it sometimes the "Comment of Antiquity", without telling us how low Antiquity extends: sometimes he is for the "three first Centuries" only; sometimes he is for "the best and purest Ages", and sometimes, if I guess right at his Sentiments, he would extend Antiquity to the very present times: For in explaining the first Article of the Creed, he produces the Authority of *Ruffinus*, and *Cyril*, and Bishop *Pearson*, and Dr. *Waterland*. *Antiquity* is a loose word, of very uncertain Extent: And therefore Dr. *Waterland*, when he wrote the History of the *Athanasian Creed*, produced among the *Antient* Testimonies the Authority of a Person who liv'd as late as the Year 1439; and amongst the *Antient* Comments upon it, mentions *Peter de Osoma* in the Year 1478. However, since the Scriptures independent of the "Comment of Antiquity" are sometimes expressly allowed by this Writer to be "the Rule of Truth", I shall thence judge of this present Debate.

The first thing in the Exposition which gave occasion for a Remark is this.

I.

Dr. *Clarke*, speaking of the Works of the Devil, had censured some Christians, “ who worship Images of wood and stone, “ and consecrated Elements, instead of the “ Maker and Preserver of all things ;— and “ set up and pray to imaginary Intercessors, “ Angels and Saints, and the blessed Vir- “ gin, instead of praying in the name of “ him, who is the One Mediator between “ God and Man, even our Lord Jesus “ Christ. All which practices are manifest “ Idolatry, worship paid to Idol-Gods and “ *Idol-Mediators*”, *Expos. p. 25.* The Remarker says, *He might have spared the latter, because Idol-Mediator is a mere Fiction, and the word has neither sense nor significancy.* p. 5.

It may seem perhaps absurd to attempt to explain a Word that has “ *neither sense nor significancy*”. But if *Idol-Gods* be an intelligible Word, methinks *Idol-Mediators* may be understood likewise. Our Author allows, that to “ pay any religious “ Worship to an Idol is setting up an Idol- “ God ”: If so, then to pray to an Idol to interceed wth God, is to make that Idol an Idol-Mediator. He that prays directly to any Saint to cure him of any Distemper,

per, makes that Saint perhaps an Idol-God: But he that prays to the same Saint to interceed with God to cure the Distemper, makes him an Idol-Mediator. In this case He is not conceived to have a Power to help his Servant himself, or to have Dominion over him; but He is conceived to have an Interest in him who has the proper Power and Dominion. So when in the Popish Litanies they pray to Saint *Cosmas and Damianus*, and all the Holy Priests and Levites, Monks and Hermits, Virgins and Widows to pray for them. — They do not imagine them to be Gods, nor have they any such Notions; but they conceive them to be *Mediators*, and to have a sort of Interest in God through their abundant merits; and that they can have access to him, and be heard, when we mortals cannot.

But, says the Remarker, “ The worship-
 “ ping of any thing either as a *medium* or
 “ otherwise, is making a God of it”: That
 is, to pray to the blessed Virgin to interceed
 with her Son to help us, is to make a God
 of the Virgin *Mary*. When a *Roman* Ca-
 tholick says, “ Let the blessed Virgin, we
 “ beseech thee, O Jesus Christ, imploy her
 “ Mediation for us to your Mercy, both
 “ now and in the hour of death”. Or
 when He applies to Her immediately, “ O
 “ blessed Mother of God, perpetual Virgin,
 “ Temple

“ Temple of the Lord, — pray for the
 “ People, mediate for the Clergy, inter-
 “ ceed for the female Sex ”—— Is this ma-
 king her a God, or a Mediator only to God,
 or to Christ? Now if she be not the true
 Mediator betwixt God and Men, then she
 is properly an Idol-Mediator: and so are all
 the rest of the Saints and Martyrs who are
 desired to be intercessors in this manner be-
 twixt God and Man.

But this it seems is not so very bad. “ Now
 “ comes the offensive Passage, and for which
 “ Dr. Clarke hitherto had been only paving
 “ the way”. *And indeed, says Dr. Clarke,*
every thing is faulty of this kind, beside
the worship of him alone who created the
world by his power, who redeemed man-
kind by his Son, and who sanctifies all
good persons by his Holy Spirit. “ Is not
 “ this as much as saying, that all religious
 “ worship is faulty, except the worship of
 “ the Father only”.

Remark,
 P. 5, &c.

The Remarker seemed to be so sensible
 that these words would not come up to the
 point he wished for, that he says, “ Because
 “ I would be tender of charging any Man
 “ with Positions which *possibly might not*
 “ *be his*, I am content to say, that he has
 “ at least *dropped* the worship of two of the
 “ divine persons, has inserted no provision
 “ or salvo so far as appears, which ought
 “ to

p. 22. " to have been done." And after a long Dissertation against *The Modest-plea*, He concludes this Article, " All that I positively charge the Exposition with, is dropping the Worship of two of the Divine Persons." I reply,

p. 3. 1st, As the *Catechism* does not speak a word about the worship of the Son or the Holy Ghost, it cou'd be no fault in Dr. *Clarke* not to explain a Doctrine that was not in the *Catechism*. Suppose the Dr. had done so, the Remarker with more Justice might have exclaimed against *New Catechisms imposed upon us as Expositions of the Old*.

2^{dly}, If this Author intended hereby to insinuate, that Dr. *Clarke* was against all worship to the Son, this is a gross Calumny. In his *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity*, where he has particularly explained himself, and fully upon this Subject, This is the 50th Proposition.

" After and upon account of the accomplishment of which Dispensation, viz. his Incarnation, He is described in Scripture as invested with distinct worship in his own person his original glory and dignity being at the same time revealed, and his Exaltation

“ Exaltation in the human Nature to
 “ his Mediatorial Kingdom declared :
 “ Himself sitting upon his Father’s
 “ Throne at the right hand of the
 “ Majesty of God, and receiving the
 “ Prayers and Thanksgivings of his
 “ Church, as the alone Mediator be-
 “ tween God and Men.”

For the Truth of this Proposition, he re-
 fers the Reader to upwards of *thirty* Texts
 which justify *Praying* to him for Grace,
 Peace, Blessing, Direction, Assistance and
 Comfort from him ; Four Texts that men-
 tion his Disciples *worshipping him* ; Eight
 that mention *Calling upon his Name* ;
 Three, the *calling him to witness* ; Four,
 the *Invoking* him in *Prayer* ; and Twelve,
 that ascribe *Glory* to him, and *Praise* and
Thanksgiving.

As to the Holy Ghost He says, Propof. 53d.

“ The Honour which Christians are
 “ bound to pay peculiarly to the Per-
 “ son of the Holy Spirit, is expressed
 “ in these Texts following ; wherein
 “ we are directed either by Precept or
 “ Example
 “ To Baptize in his Name, *Matt. 28.*
 “ 19.

B

“ To

- " To wish Grace and Peace, and Blessing from him, 2 *Cor.* 13, 14. *Rev.* 1. 4.
- " To appeal to him as Witness, *Rom.* 9. 1. *c.* 15. 30.
- " To take heed not to resist him, *Acts* 7. 51. 1 *Theff.* 5. 19.
- " not to do despite to him, *Heb.* 10. 29.
- " not to tempt him, *Acts* 5. 9.
- " not to grieve him, *Eph.* 4. 30."

p. 6. If the Scriptures are indeed the " Rule of Truth," as the Remarker sometimes allows; and Dr. *Clarke* has determined from Scripture the *Worship* which is due to the Son, and likewise what ought to be paid to the Holy Ghost, 'tis injurious to charge him with " appearing to *exclude* the worship of two of the Divine Persons." And if the Scriptures are not the " Rule of Interpretation" of our Church's Forms; yet still what is *not* in the Church's Forms is not necessarily to be added to them, on purpose only to be expounded. But, 3dly, What was Dr. *Clarke* speaking about? Why, *Idol-Gods* and *Idol-Meditators*; and then He immediately adds, " And indeed every thing is faulty of this kind beside the worship of him alone who created the world by his power, &c." What do those words, *of this kind*, relate

late to, but to the Subject he was talking about last, *viz. Idol-Gods and Idol-Mediators*. All addressees to Idol-Gods, and all to Idol-Mediators to interceed with God, are faulty : 'Tis paying a worship which ought not to be paid to or thro' such Mediums. But the right, or not faulty worship is of him alone who created the World, &c. Of Him *alone* ; not exclusive of a worship which is to be paid to the Son, who is *not* an *Idol-God* or an *Idol-Mediator* ; but of him *alone*, exclusive of all worship, to all and every Idol-God and Idol-Mediator.

What now is all this Outcry of " robbing our blessed Lord, and the blessed Spirit of all religious Worship " founded on? What means this Author by the Imputation of " Sacrilege and Blasphemy? " What is the meaning of the injurious Comparison betwixt the Doctor, and " the Socinians who are so express both " for Adoration and Invocation of Christ? " Does not Dr. *Clarke* expressly contend for the *worship* of Christ? Does he not plead for *praising* him, and *praying* to him? Yes. But because every thing is not said in every Book, where there is no proper place for it as well as where there is, and just as this Author would have it, therefore the Exposition is " *unsound* ; " 'tis " *poi-*

p. 21.

p. 22.

“*soning the Fountains,*” ’tis “*Erroneous,*
 “*and a dangerous Snare.*” Let this be
 put into some form of Argument: Dr.
Clarke in expounding the Catechism (which
 has spoke of the worship of the One God
 and Father of all) he likewise has treated
 of the worship of the One God and Fa-
 ther of all: But then, the Catechism ha-
 ving said nothing about the worship of the
 Son and Holy Ghost, he likewise in ex-
 poundng the Catechism has said nothing
 about the worship of the Son and Holy
 Ghost, tho’ he has fully pleaded for it else-
 where: Therefore his Exposition is *un-*
sound. The Charge had been just as good,
 had the Remarker thought fit to have made
 it, that in the Exposition of the Catechism
Dr. Clarke had not expounded the *Reve-*
lations: And it had been equally to the
 Purpose thence to have inferr’d, then fore
 his Exposition is a *dangerous Snare.*

II.

The next Imputation against the Ex-
 position is, that the Author of it has *neg-*
lected to explain the Question, **What dost**
thou chiefly learn in these Articles of
thy Belief? And the Answer **First I**
learn, &c. This Observation the Remark-
 p. 24. er thinks to be “*really of Weight,*”
 “*This*

" This is not doing Justice to our Church-
 " Catechism, nor answering the Title of
 " the Book : Expounding is one thing, ex-
 " punging is another. "

Let us suppose this Observation for
 once to be " of Weight ; " yet, when in
 the same Circumstances no Odium, no great
 Clamour cou'd be raised, the Zeal of our
 Author was at an End. The Doctor has in
 the very same manner " expunged " out of
 the Catechism (for so it seems it must be
 called *expunged*) those very important
 Questions, **What doest thou chiefly learn
 by these Commandments ? What is thy
 Duty towards God ? What is thy
 Duty towards thy Neighbour ? And
 the Answers to them.** And likewise after
 he had expounded the Lord's Prayer, He
 " expunged, " in the same Sense and Man-
 ner, that Question, **What desirest thou of
 God in this Prayer ?** And the Answer
 to it. And yet gross as this Crime is re-
 presented here, and weighty as the Observa-
 tion was, where the Author cou'd talk a-
 bout the *Godhead* and *Divinity* of the Son,
 and by that means try to raise an Odium ; he
 passes over in silence the other Omissions,
 and tells us very gravely, that " from page
 " 154 to p. 293. He meets with nothing
 " that wants a Remark, " though within Remark,
 that compass all these Omissions lay. Could P. 70.
 he

he not have harangued a little upon so important Omissions ? What, nothing that "*wants a Remark*," when the Duty towards God, and that towards our Neighbour are *expunged* ? Are not these of as much Importance in a Christian Catechism as the Worship which the Catechism has said nothing about ? Surely we might have been told upon some of these Occasions what you say, " The fairer way " would have been to have said, The " Church-Catechism explain'd and corrected, rather than have given the Title " of an Exposition to the *whole*, which " belongs only to a Part." But all is well, though the Duty to God and our Neighbour be passed by in silence, provided the favourite Topick of Declamation be not precluded. All is well, and he could " meet with nothing that wants a Remark."

However, since our Remarker thinks his Observation of *weight*, it may be fit to take notice, that what He thinks " neglected" by Dr. *Clarke*, is fully explained in his Exposition upon the *Articles* of the *Creed*. Just as the *Duty towards God*, and *towards our Neighbour* is expounded in the *Ten Commandments*; and the things contained in the Answer to the Question, *What desirest thou of God in this Prayer?* are all contained

contained in the Exposition of the *Lord's-Prayer*. And it would have been impertinent *Repetition* to have expounded these things, when He had expounded the Foundations of them already.

III.

The next thing that is censured is, not any particular Passage in the Exposition, but what lies betwixt *p. 42.* and *p. 49,* and this is summed up thus: That Dr. *Clarke* thinks "that he is to interpret the Creed "by the Scripture". Whereas, "The "Church-Forms ought most certainly to "be interpreted according to the Mind of "the Church that made them: And if so "interpreted, they appear not to agree with "Scripture, they are to be rejected as false, "and not strained to a Sense not their own "in order to make them true".

p. 25.

The fault of Dr. *Clarke* is, his attempt to interpret the *Apostles Creed* by *Scripture*. A Christian, a Protestant, a Divine, ought to be forgiven this injury, and even to be thanked for shewing that the Creed, into which all are baptized, is exactly agreeable to the Rule of Truth. What Harm can possibly arise from this, that every Article is capable of being expressed in the very Language of Scripture, and is founded upon

Remark,
P. 25.

Ibid.

upon clear Texts? That there is nothing professed to be believed at Baptism, but what all Christians of all denominations agree to be just and true? But our Author, if one may guess by his manner of expressing himself, seems to think that some Church-Forms are inconsistent with Scripture; or else it is not to be imagined why, in the present Case, he is so desirous to oppose the *Rule of Interpretation* to the *Rule of Truth*. The "*Scriptures*", says he, "are the Rule of Truth, but not the Rule of Interpretation: They are the Rule for receiving any forms, but not the Rule for understanding them". If a public form be agreeable to the Rule of Truth, and be shewn to be so, is a Man to be censured for this? Yes, it seems. "The meaning of Church-Forms is first to be judged of from the natural force of the words, the intent of the compiler, and the laws of true criticism". In the case before us, viz. the Apostles Creed, there is no one word which in its natural force, or by any Laws of Criticism, or for ought I know, in the intent of the Compilers, is not exactly agreeable to the Scripture. If there be any such, it had been right in our Author to have produced it. That would indeed have been a Confutation of Dr. Clarke's Exposition,

Exposition, and would have shown that in an Exposition of the Church-Forms we ought not to have regard to the Rule of Truth.

The Scriptures are the Rule of Faith, and they are a compleat one, because it is impossible for us to know more of the Will of God than what he has thought fit to discover. It is in vain therefore for any one to send us to *Cyril*, or *Ruffinus*, or any other uninspired person, to know the meaning of a Text of Scripture, since the question will recur, How came he by his Knowledge? The natural and usual Signification of Words, and the Rules of Criticism, must be the means of discovering the Intent of God; and if any other helps to this occur, they ought to be made use of. But if in these helps we meet with mere Hypotheses to reconcile certain Texts, we should be careful how we admit these Inventions of Men; and should never confound them with, or set an equal value upon them, and the Scriptures.

“ It is impossible”, says the Remarker, p 24
 “ to reconcile the principles laid down
 “ in the Exposition, with what the Cate-
 “ chism *plainly means* by *God the Son*, and
 “ *God the Holy Ghost*, as taught in the
 “ Creed”. The Principles laid down in
 the Exposition are Scripture - Principles,
 Scripture-Propositions, laid down usually in,
 C and

and always confirmed by the very words of Scripture, and those words of Scripture explained by the usual known rules of Criticism. Does the Catechism then "*plainly mean*" something *irreconcilable* with the Scripture? Is the Apostles Creed plainly inconsistent with the New Testament? The Remarker may tell us so: and as he understands it, perhaps it may be so. But I should be sorry to find our Baptismal Creed, or any part of that Instruction which we are taught so early in life, at such distance from the Rule of Truth, as to be *irreconcilable* to it.

p 24.

But, says the Remarker, "He interprets the Creed by Scripture, that is, *by his own Sense* of Scripture." And so must every Man that lives interpret the word of God *by his own Sense*. The Question therefore is, whether he has mistaken the Sense? And this must be resolved into this: — Not what *Ruffinus* says, or any other Father; but what is the critical meaning of the *Words*? If the Enquiry be about a *Doctrine*, — then, what is the *Doctrine* contained in the several Texts, when they are laid together; and not what may be the possible meaning of a single Text? And this I think to be an inviolable Rule, that a difficult Text is to be expounded always by a plain and easy one; and not

vice versa, an easy one by one that is difficult. In short, all proper helps are to be used to understand the Scriptures, as you would use all proper helps to understand (allowing for the different Importance of the Subjects) *Tully* or *Plato*, or any other Writer. But every Man must understand, and ought to understand *by his own Sense*; nor can the Authority of one, or of many combined together, determine a thinking Man, further than the Reasons for their Opinions weigh.

But the Church that made ~~the~~ Catechism, "the Intent of the Compiler," is to be considered; "the Church-Forms ought most Ibid.
"certainly to be interpreted according to
"the Mind of the Church that made
"them".

The Intent of the *Compiler*, the *Mind* of the Church, (let Church signify what it will, since it is allowed to have a *Mind*) was to express a Scripture-doctrine, a Doctrine discovered by Jesus Christ, or by his Apostles. It was not their *Intent*, or their *Mind*, I hope, to deliver a Doctrine merely of their own Invention, or which had no Foundation in Scripture. I agree then with our Author, that if they have made use of such words as in their usual and ordinary Signification cannot be *reconciled* to Scripture, the Propositions in which such words

are, are to be rejected as false. But if they have used such words as in their natural Signification are reconcileable to Scripture, even supposing the Compilers had a different meaning, it is lawful in such a case to interpret such word according to the Rule of Truth. But see this point handled at large in a Pamphlet, entitled, *The Case of Subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles*. Printed for James Knapton, 1721; and in the *Vindication* of it.

IV.

To proceed : Dr. Clarke says, *In things fundamental, in things required as of necessity to eternal Salvation, it is evident this rule (viz. of revealed Religion) ought to be so plain, that no honest and careful mind, even of mean capacity, to whom the Sermons of Christ and his Apostles have ever been distinctly rehearsed, can be in any danger of mistaking.* The Method taken to refute this is, first, by shewing some absurd Consequences which the Remarker thinks necessarily would follow from it; p. 26. 29. and 2dly, by declaring it to be neither a safe nor true Rule. Before I consider this Remark, I must premise that

• The

The Doctrines of our Saviour, and of those commissioned by him, are the whole and the only Rule of Truth in matters of Revealed Religion. No Man can know more than is revealed; nor can any thing be required to be believed either to Salvation, or in general by any Christian, more than is contained in Scripture. No Church, no Authority upon Earth, can require more, without the utmost presumption, without setting themselves in the seat of God, and imposing their own Fancies instead of the Will of God. Now as that which is not understood by any person cannot by him be thought to be revealed; from hence it follows, that every Man must understand for himself; every Man must judge according to his best Abilities for himself; and every Man must believe for himself; as much as he must be saved for himself. If therefore "any thing be required as of *necessity* to "eternal Salvation," it must be what every Man must understand, or else he could not be saved: and if *every Man* may understand it, it must be plain to *every honest and careful Mind*.

Let us see now what Corollaries the Remarker has drawn. *First*, says he, "it is not
 "necessary to eternal Salvation to believe
 "that the Father alone is *necessarily existing*." Why? "because innumerable
 "careful

p. 26.

“ careful and honest minds — have lived
 “ and died in a disbelief of it.” Pray, Sir,
 produce the Text of Scripture, which ever
 said that it is of *necessity to eternal Salva-*
tion, so much as to have an Idea of the
necessary Existence of God?

p. 26.

2dly, “ It will further follow,” says the
 Remarker, “ that it is not necessary to Sal-
 vation to believe that the Father alone
 “ — is God of the universe, *exclusive* of the
 “ Son and Holy Ghost.” Again I reply,
 that the Rule of Truth has never made
 it necessary, or required it as of necessity
 to Salvation, to believe that the word *God*
excludes, or *includes* the Son and Holy
 Ghost. It is fundamental to believe that
 God is; and that he is a rewarder of them
 that diligently seek him. But to believe
 that the Three Persons, Father, Son and
 Holy Ghost, “ are *equal*, and all together
 “ make up one God,” is no where said in
 Scripture: But is at best an Hypothesis to
 reconcile a few Texts of Scripture. If it
 be any where said, that the Three Persons
 “ all together make up one God,” pro-
 duce the place, and do not impose or re-
 quire a Submission to your Consequences
 from certain Texts; obscure, remote, and
 perhaps unintelligible Consequences, as In-
 stances of what is required of every Man as
 of necessity to Salvation.

p. 19.

3dly,

3dly, He goes on, " It will further fol- p. 26.
 " low, that none of the Propositions in
 " *Scripture-doctrine*," (this Author I suppose
 means Dr. *Clarke*'s Book, the Title of which
 is, *THE Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity* ;)
 " so far as they are contrary to our Church's
 " Doctrine, are of necessity to Salvation."
 Pray has Dr. *Clarke*, or any one else said,
 that such Propositions of his Book as are
 contrary to our Church's Doctrine, are of
 necessity to Salvation? If neither He, nor
 any one else, has said so, what sort of a
 Corollary is this? or how will it prove
 the Principles laid down in the *Exposition* to
 be false?

4thly, " It will likewise follow," says Ibid.
 the Remarker, " that it is by no means ne-
 " cessary to Salvation to believe that *all* re-
 " ligious Worship, and *all* Prayers are to be
 " directed to the Father." Here again I
 ask, Where have the Scriptures said that
 this is necessary to Salvation to be believed?
 Or where has Dr. *Clarke* so much as inti-
 mated that it is necessary to Salvation to
 believe that *all* Worship is to be directed to
 the Father, when he expressly pleads that
some Worship is to be directed to the Son?

Lastly, " It will follow, that the Belief p. 27.
 " of the Apostles Creed as interpreted by
 " the *Exposition* is not necessary to Salva-
 " tion." Was ever such a Corollary drawn
 before?

before? Do the Scriptures ever mention the Apostles Creed, or the *Exposition* made by Dr. *Clarke*? The Rule of Truth alone must contain whatever is necessary to Salvation; and that requires, as does likewise Dr. *Clarke's Exposition*, Repentance from dead Works, and Faith towards God; The belief of Jesus to be the Christ; the Resurrection from the Dead and Eternal Judgment. These are necessary Principles, contain'd in Scripture, in the Apostles Creed, and in Dr. *Clarke's Exposition* of it, and are plain to every careful and honest Mind.

As these Corollaries are drawn upon supposition of the Principle being true, and which the Remarker imagines wou'd destroy it, He next attacks the Principle itself as neither *safe* nor *true*. We must always keep the Principle in our view; "In things required as of Necessity to Salvation, it is evident the Rule of Revelation ought to be so plain, that no careful honest Mind, to whom the Sermons of Christ and his Apostles have been distinctly rehears'd, can be in danger of mistaking." In opposition to this we are told,

p. 27. *1st.* "There is no Truth whatever so plain—but it may be obscured—to such a degree, that common Christians may
" be

“ be puzzled.” Supposing this, What then? The consequence is ; not that the Rule before laid down is neither safe nor true, which was the Point to be proved ; but this—Therefore nothing at all is plain, no Truth whatever can be required as necessary to Salvation : For nothing can be required to be believed as necessary to Salvation, which is obscured and darkned to such a degree, as to make it impossible to be believed. He goes on,

2dly, “ Any Jew or Deist, Pagan or Mahometan, may say that the Proofs upon which the Christian Revelation rests (Miracles and Prophecies) ought to be so plain, that no honest and careful Mind—can be in danger of mistaking.” That is, what is required of every Man as necessary to Salvation, in a Revelation by him received, must be plain : Therefore the Proofs of that Revelation must be plain : *i. e.* Because an acknowledged Law must be plain to them that submit to it and own it, therefore the Proofs upon which the Power of the Legislator rests must be plain. Are such Consequences worth a Confutation? He says,

3dly, “ If Christianity were thus thrown off, and every other Religion but Natural Religion—I know not how much of that might go off next, upon the same Principle.” Dr. Clarke is speaking of a

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Rule

p. 28.

Ibid.)

Rule of Scripture or Revelation, and argues that what is required in *That* as necessary to Salvation must be plain. To confute this Position; suppose, says he, there is *no Revelation*—Why then you don't refute a Principle that supposes and argues from a Revelation. *Quid cum isto homine facias?* But he proceeds still,

p. 28, 29. 4thly, "I dislike the Rule, because I
 " think it will leave the Man just where
 " he was before, and not at all the wiser
 " as to pitching upon fundamental Doc-
 " trines." But what is this to the Pur-
 pose? Name, if you can, any one Point
 which the Rule of Truth has made necessary
 to Salvation, and which is *not plain* to every
 honest and careful Mind. Men may meet
 with many Points in Scripture that are ob-
 scure, and they may *pitch upon* some Points
 which they may imagine groundlessly to
 be *fundamental* ones. But yet that does
 not alter the Points which are there laid
 down as necessary Articles, nor make them
 more or less so. What are Fundamental
 may be plain, though some may chuse to
 amuse themselves with their own Notions;
 and may conceive those to be Fundamen-
 tal, which to another can never be proved
 such.

This is all the Remarker has suggested a-
 gainst Dr. *Clarke's* Position, and then he
 proceeds

proceeds to give us a Rule of his own.

“ I should think it much better to say, that
 “ whatever can be prov'd to be taught in
 “ Scripture, and in the *first and purest Ages*,
 “ as of Necessity to Salvation, is now also ne-
 “ cessary to all Christians, but in such a de-
 “ gree as they are capable of knowing, or
 “ doing it. Allowances must be always
 “ made for want of Capacity, or Opportu-
 “ nity, and for insuperable Prejudices.”

In this Rule it is very remarkable, that
 what is taught in the *first and purest Ages*
 as of necessity to Salvation, is put upon
 the level with what is taught as necessary
 to Salvation in Scripture. I know not how
 far he will extend the *first and purest Ages*
 in the present Case ; Whether he designs
 only the Three first Centuries, or the Four
 first, or whether he will take in more to
 serve his Purposes. In Page 20, indeed he
 says, “ All should agree to take Scripture
 “ for their Rule, and the practice of the
 “ *three first Centuries* for the Model of
 “ their Worship.” But elsewhere he leaves
 this Point at large and unconfined to any
 Time, and only speaks in general of “ Anti-
 quity.” At the End of the Remarks, when
 He resumes this Subject, He tells us, “ The
 “ just Authority of the Christian Law can no
 “ otherwise be kept up, but by maintain-
 “ ing the Veneration due to Sacred Writ,

p. 29, 30.

p. 92.

“ both as to Matters of Faith and Practice :
 “ If we weaken its Authority in respect of
 “ either, we do it in both, and endanger
 “ the whole.” In this he refers us to *Sacred Writ alone*. But then he presently afterwards adds in the same Page,—“ There
 “ is an absolute Necessity of fixing a cer-
 “ tain Rule—That Rule is Scripture, but
 “ taking *Antiquity* along with it as the best
 “ Comment upon it.”

In the midst of these Declarations from a Protestant, I must observe,

1. That if some few Writers which are not put into the Canon of Scripture were, as has been observ'd by some, “ instructed
 “ by such as were inspired,” and their Authority therefore may on that account be valued ; yet, I suppose the same Deference is not to be paid to all the Writers of the *first and purest Ages*. Suppose the “ purest
 “ Ages” ceas'd just when the Council of *Nice* was call'd, just when Riches and Power, when Ambition and Contention, made such Havock as it did in the Christian Church, all the Writers of those Ages were not equally instructed by inspired Persons: Nay, by our Author, they are allowed to be Men, i. e. *fallible* Creatures, however *great and good*. Why then does the Remarker say, “ Whatever can be proved
 “ to be taught in Scripture, and in the
 “ first

Remark,
 p. 93. +

“ *first and purest Ages*, as of necessity to
 “ Salvation, is now also necessary to all
 “ Christians?” Why does he join *fallible*
 Men with *inspired* Teachers of the Gos-
 pel?

2. What Occasion have we to go to
 these *first and purest Ages*? Did *Justin*
Martyr, or *Tertullian*, (who is allowed on
 all hands to have been egregiously mistaken
 in many Points,) or *Irenæus*, or *Ori-*
gen, &c. know *more*, or more *clearly* what
 is revealed by God in the Gospel; than o-
 thers do, who have the *same Gospel* lying
now before them? Were these Men inspi-
 red, or taught of God, more than others
 are that live 1500 Years after them? If
 they were, we ought to pay them their due
 regard, and receive all their Writings as
 we do the inspired ones of the Gospel.

3. If Christians are obliged to consult the
first and purest Ages, to know what is ne-
 cessary to be believed in order to Salvation,
 all Protestants as well as Papists are in an
 unpardonable Iniquity, not to translate all
 the Writers of these *first and purest Ages*
 into the vulgar Tongues, and let them be
 at least in every Church, and read there o-
 penly to the People as the Bible is, that
 they may be able to know what is funda-
 mentally necessary to their Salvation.

4. Let

4. Let us suppose that the Scriptures have told us some necessary Doctrine, yet if the Fathers of these *first and purest Ages* have not likewise treated of this Doctrine, it is not enough that the Scriptures have declared it to be necessary : For it must be “ proved to be taught in Scripture, and in “ the *first and purest Ages*.” So that the Scriptures alone are an *insufficient* Rule of Faith, and we want the *Comment of Antiquity* to help us out. Happy the Men of Leisure and Learning ! For they alone can certainly know all the necessary Articles of Faith, whilst the Men of lower Capacities are in the nature of the Thing excluded from the Means of knowing even what is Fundamental, since the Learned do not think fit to translate *Origen's Works*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens of Alexandria*, and the rest which continue in *Greek* and *Latin*, not to be understood by the bulk of Christians. And till we know what these Men declare to be Fundamentals, we can't be sure that we know all that is fundamental to a Christian.

5. Notwithstanding these *first and purest Ages* here come in, yet elsewhere the *Scripture alone* is the *Rule of Truth*. If a Reason be demanded, why the Scripture is to be join'd to the fallible Writers of the *first and purest Ages*, no other can be produced but

but this—The Remarker imagines, (for it is in Fact no more than mere Imagination) that he has *some* of the Writers of these *first and purest Ages* with him, in some of his Notions about the Trinity. Now he cannot but know that his Adversaries likewise claim them all, or all but one, to be with them. Nay, there is not one of them, but at times speaks much more favourably on their Sides, than on the Remarkers. He knows, that the very *Arians* openly appeal'd to the first three Centuries, as to the Patrons of their Notions: Much more can those who disclaim the Errors of *Arius*, and who oppose an unintelligible Notion, of *Three intelligent Agents subsisting in one undivided Substance, being but one intelligent Agent*. But however that be, I say,

6thly, The Remarker himself grants, That “ the just Authority of Christianity “ can no otherwise be kept up, but by “ maintaining the Veneration due to Sacred Writ.” But then he can't but know, that the Veneration for it is less'n'd, when That and the Words of weak, fallible, Men are join'd to it, and made of equal Weight. I wou'd not be thought absolutely and universally and in *every thing*, to condemn the Writers of the *first and purest Ages*: And perhaps for what I Remark, say, I may be told by our Author, “ Men P. 95. “ that know little of the Fathers will of “ coure

“ course speak with Contempt of them.” But I must tell him, and I speak it from my Knowledge, that if we were now to write as some of these very Writers of the *first and purest Ages* did, no Man of Sense would read what was wrote. I will not produce particular Instances either of their reasoning, or of their interpreting of Scripture. But let any one put their Arguments into Syllogism, and examine their Interpretations by the Rules of strict Critique, and then judge of the Respect which is to be paid to them on these accounts.

7thly, The Remarker has join'd to the Scriptures what *the first and purest Ages* have taught. I think we might admit this Principle, provided *the first and purest Ages* perfectly agree with the Scriptures; or, if we could know certainly what was the Opinion of these purest Ages of the Church. To instance in the case of the *Trinity*, the darling Point of our Author; He tells us with a great deal of Assurance, that these *purest Ages* have uniformly held *his* Notions. Dr. *Clarke* has produced, for ought I know, a thousand Passages out of them, to prove that they never held the Notion which Dr. *Waterland* has espous'd. 'Tis certain that no *General Council* had in these *first and purest Ages* determin'd this Question; and

and therefore suppose that any of the Fathers were on Dr. *Waterland's* Side of the Question, yet it would not follow that that was the Doctrine which was always, and every where, and by all received as true. Suppose it a general Doctrine in any particular Church, yet how does it follow that it is the Doctrine of the universal Church, or of all the Professors of Christianity? It would be a fallacious way of reasoning to say, that the commonly received Notion in any Country is the universally received one: Or that an Opinion, which it may not be safe to oppose, is therefore by all allowed to be true. But,

sthly, I cannot but think it a high Indignity to join to the Scriptures these *first and purest* Ages, as they are called. For what were these Ages in fact to which so much deference is paid? No sooner were the Apostles dead, but the Mystery of Iniquity began to appear more openly, in Forgery, in Wickedness, and in the vilest Heresies, and the most absurd Notions that ever were broached. I do not say that there were not very many good and virtuous Men in those times, many that really and truly embraced the Gospel, and that lived as became the Professors of Christianity. But notwithstanding that, the *Forgeries* alone of those times have furnished out whole Volumes, to the everlasting Reproach of those Ages: And

E there

there were more *Hereticks* in number, and more shameful wickedness practised amongst them, (if we may believe those who give us the Catalogues of them) than have been perhaps in the same quantity of Time since. They were Ages of Weakness and Credulity, and therefore easily imposed upon by the Arts and Frauds of designing People. Bishop *Fell*, whom no one can suspect of “know-
 “ing little of the Fathers,” or of having them in “contempt,” shall be my voucher here. “Non est dissimulandum, *says he*,
 “tantam fuisse *primis sæculis fingendi licen-*
 “tiam, tam pronam in *credendo facilita-*
 “tem, ut rerum gestarum fides graviter ex-
 “inde laboraverit : nec orbis terrarum tan-
 “tum, sed & dei Ecclesia de *temporibus suis*
 “*mythicis* merito queratur.” i. e. *It must be*
owned, that in the first Ages they took such
an excessive Liberty of Forging, and so great
was their Credulity, that the credit of
real facts is by that means greatly im-
paired: nor can the [Heathen] world
alone, but the Church of God may likewise
justly complain of its fabulous Ages.

p. 20.

Before I proceed to the next Head, 'twill be proper to observe that whereas this Author tells us, that “all should agree to
 “take Scripture for their Rule, and the
 “Practice of the three first Centuries for
 “the Model of their Worship”——the Church of *England* in particular varies from these

these first Centuries in very many instances :
 And if it did not, it has a *right* to do it,
 supposing these first Centuries to have been
 even uniform in their Practices. It is not e-
 nough to say, that they that refuse that mo-
 del are “ justly blameable, and the dividers p. 26.
 “ of the Christian Church :” Nor to add,
 “ Be it at their peril who do so, as they will
 “ answer it at the great Day of Accounts.”
 He knows, or ought to know, that one
 Church varied from another in those times
 in *many* instances : There was not an Uni-
 formity of Rites, and Ceremonies, and Cu-
 stoms, but every Church was at Liberty to
 follow their own. Nay they went so far,
 as to esteem those Men breakers of the Unity
 of the Church, who were for *imposing* upon
 others the Models of their Worship.

But supposing that the three first Cen-
 turies were all *uniform* ; that they all
 observed the same Rites ; that they all
worshipped in the same *Form* ; yet what is
 the Obligation that this lays upon us ? Why
 is a Man blame-worthy now, if he refuses
 to comply with any Model of Worship
 used Fifteen Hundred Years ago ? Or why
 may not we use *our* Liberty, or fix such a
 Model of Worship as we judge suitable to
 our present Times ? Are we to answer for
 it at the Day of Accounts, that we have not
 imitated or followed the Example of *Justin*
Martyr, or *Origen*, or *Tertullian* ? Jesus

I know, and Paul I know, but who are these? What one Church in Christendom is not *blameable* on these accounts, if this be blame-worthy? These first Ages claimed no Authority over the succeeding ones, or if they had claimed it, they must have answered fully to the Demand, by what Right they did so.

But let us hear the Rule which our Author gives us in Opposition to Dr. Clarke, without taking notice of the Absurdity of joining “ the first and purest Ages ” to the Scripture. “ Upon the whole,” says he,
 p. 29, 30. “ I should think it *much better* to say, that
 “ whatever can be proved to be taught in
 “ Scripture, and in the first and purest Ages,
 “ as of necessity to Salvation, is now also
 “ necessary to all Christians; but in *such a*
 “ *degree as they are capable of knowing or*
 “ *doing it: Allowances must* always be made
 “ for *want of capacity, or opportunity,* and
 “ for *insuperable prejudices*, as to the
 “ strength of which — we are not com-
 “ missioned, nor qualified to determine.”

In virtue of this Rule, no Man can pretend to judge what is a *fundamental* Doctrine, and what not; notwithstanding the pretence that this is a *much better* Rule than that laid down by Dr. Clarke. And this Author allows it, when he says, —
 p. 30. “ As to marking
 “ out any Catalogue of Fundamentals — it
 “ would be an idle Attempt and very so-
 “ lemn

“ solemn trifling.” I must observe likewise, that it follows, that his own Doctrine of the Trinity cannot be a *fundamental* Doctrine, unless to such as “ are capable of knowing “ it.” But what I would principally ask here is, Why is it “ an idle Attempt to mark “ out a Catalogue of Fundamentals?” Is it not a rational Question, — what ~~it~~ is that makes a man a Christian? Call it “ solemn “ trifling” if you please; but every man hath a Right to demand an Answer to it; and if you cannot answer it, it shews either that you don’t know your self what it is that makes a man a Christian; or if you do know it, you don’t care to speak openly to so important a Point. ’Twas a Question, which formerly was asked without Offence — Sirs, *What must I do to be saved? What shall I do that I may inherit eternal Life?* And is it now grown “ an idle attempt, and so- “ lem trifling” to answer it. Do not tell me, that “ every part of the New Testa- “ ment is *equally inspired*, and the whole “ taken together is our Rule of *necessary* “ Faith and Practice.” The Enquiry is about *Fundamentals, things necessary to Sal- vation*; and it will always be asked, whether it be made by the wise God as *necessary* to believe that St. Paul left *his Cloak at Troas*, as it is that *Jesus is the Christ?* Fundamen- tals are things which must “ suit every “ Man,” whatever his Capacities and Cir- cumstan-

cumstances are : Nor is one thing fundamental to a Man of Parts, another thing fundamental to one of mean Abilities. Men indeed may build upon these Foundations Wood or Hay, Silver or Gold ; but still the Foundations must be the same to all equally.

If indeed the Enquiry be, What is necessary to Salvation to one that is already a Christian? then I grant that “ Allowances must be made for want of Capacity, Opportunity, and insuperable Prejudices.” All Christians have not the same Talents committed to them : But then, why is this Author’s Rule so *much better* than Dr. *Clarke’s*, who had laid it down, that whatever is *necessary to Salvation*, is and must be plain to *every honest* Mind. The way to try the Truth of both Rules is, to consider what the Scriptures have made necessary to the Salvation of Christians ; *viz.* Faith in God, and Repentance from evil Works, a Resurrection to a future Life, and a Judgment to come. Are these things such as Men even of the lowest Capacity can mistake? If any one should add any disputable Points to these fundamental ones, then Dr. *Clarke* contends, that *they who want Capacity cannot be bound to receive them* ; which is exactly the same with what our Author here lays down, notwithstanding he prefers his own Assertion “ as so much better ” than what the Doctor had said. In short,

Expos.
P. 46.

short, nothing is necessary to Salvation, which we have not Abilities to *receive* or *understand*; and whatever we can understand to be the Will of God, that will become our Duty to believe and practice. And this Dr. *Clarke* contends for as much as this Author can.

V.

The Remarker next finds fault with Dr. *Clarke* for saying, “ Into the Form of Baptism, and into the Catechism, and into the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, the Apostles Creed only has very *wisely* been put, as being easy and clear, and intelligible by all, and not mixed with any Matters of doubtful Disputation.” P. 32, 33:

The Censure passed upon this is — “ It is a *narrow* and *partial* way of thinking to judge of the *Wisdom* of every thing, or any thing, only by its falling in with one’s particular Taste, or favourite Opinion. No doubt, but this Compliment upon what has been so *wisely* done, means no more than this, that it was *wise* to chuse a Creed which is shortest and least explicit on the Doctrine of the Trinity. — Had our Reformers been *wise* enough to see it, it may be doubted whether they would have had so much respect to this Creed : So that it is wrong to commend their

“ *Wisdom*

“ *Wisdom* in it, when it might be more
 “ owing to their *Simplicity*.

p. 93.

I admit this way of reasoning here at
present ; and shall only apply it to our Au-
 thor himself, who observes, “ It was *wise*
 “ and excellent Advice given in one of our
 “ Canons ——— That the Clergy should
 “ teach nothing from the Pulpit, as being
 “ of religious Obligation to the People,
 “ but what should be consonant to the
 “ Doctrine of the Old and New Testa-
 “ ment, and what *the Catholic Fathers*
 “ *and antient Bishops had collected or con-*
 “ *cluded* from thence.” See here an in-
 stance of a “ *narrow and partial* way of
 “ thinking, to judge of the *Wisdom* of
 “ any thing only by its falling in with one’s
 “ *particular Taste*.” Again: “ It was owing
 “ more to the *Simplicity* of the Reformers
 “ than to their *Wisdom*, to pay so much
 “ respect to the Apostles Creed.” It was a
 fault, it seems, in Dr. *Clarke*, to com-
 mend the *Wisdom* of those who com-
 piled our Church-Offices: And therefore
 our Author says, one would think only for
 the sake of contradicting Dr. *Clarke*, that
 they were *Fools* or *Simpletons*. Be it so.
 In *page 92*, when Dr. *Clarke* was forgot,
 he tells us, “ The Reformers here and a-
 “ broad proceeded like *wise* Men, re-
 “ ducing Religion as near as could well be,
 “ to its pure and primitive State. They
 “ went

“ went by Rule, and so knew when they
 “ had done enough.” And let me add the
 very next words after the calling the Reformers *Fools* or *weak*, and declaring what the
 word, *wisely*, signifies: “ However, in the
 “ Communion-Office — the *Nicene* Creed
 “ has been WISELY inserted; — and the
 “ *Athanasian* also has been as WISELY
 “ honoured with a Place in our Liturgy.”
 This needs no farther Application.

p. 34.

The Remarker's next Observation is, — Remark,
 “ That 'tis no commendation of a Creed P. 34--36.
 “ that it runs in generals only, if there
 “ were any Occasion or Necessity for being
 “ more particular. — As to the Pretence a-
 “ bout a shorter Creed being more easy,
 “ clear and intelligible, 'tis colour and ap-
 “ pearance only. The shorter generally
 “ any Creed is, the more obscure and am-
 “ biguous — The Apostolical Creed is not
 “ at all clearer or less mysterious as to the
 “ things themselves; and as to the words
 “ of it, it is, because short, more ambigu-
 “ ous and obscure, and not so easily seen
 “ into at first view.”

I will not dispute with this Author, whe-
 ther the *Apostles* Creed, or that longer
 Creed of *Athanasius* be the more obscure
 and unintelligible, but shall leave this Fact
 to every Reader's Judgment. Though I
 must say, that this puts me in mind of the
 F Opinion

Opinion of a very eminent Divine who died but a few Years ago, who was wont to say, that Archbishop *Tillotson* was one of the *obscurest* Writers, and *Herbert Thorndike* one of the clearest Writers that ever *England* bred. If Men will stand it out that it is Midnight when the Sun shines in its Meridian Lustre, it is in vain to attempt to confute them. However, the other things our Author says, I'll examine more particularly.

p. 34. "Creeds, says he, were at first chiefly contrived to be as Tests against Heresies." The contrary to this is true; they were *at first* neither *chiefly*, nor *at all*, "contrived as Tests against Heresies;" tho' afterwards, as Disputes arose, they were contrived as Tests against what were called Heresies: And in the disputatious contentious Times of the Church, when nothing but Ambition, and Power, and Honour, and Precedency were regarded; Councils seemed to have met for no other end, but to make and impose Creeds; and by that Trick to vacate the Preferments which their Enemies were in Possession of. At first the Creeds contained those fundamental things in Christianity, in which Men were instructed in order to Baptism: They were Summaries of what a Christian professed, as a Christian. Afterwards, I own, when Iniquity began to abound, then likewise Creeds were contrived

to

to be “ Tests against Heresies; ” and at last they were little else than the spiritual Revenges of angry Partisans; Fire-brands tossed about by artful Men, as if they were in sport; till at length the Bible not containing the Religion of Christians, was accordingly discarded, as being truly become useless.

He proceeds. Creeds “ were *at first* “ chiefly contriv’d to be as Tests against Heresies, and to *guard the Essentials* of Faith.” If He means, that at *first* Creeds contained the *Essentials* of Faith, I readily admit it. But if he intends to intimate, that *at first* they were contriv’d, and designed to secure the Essentials of Faith against what he calls Heresies—This I think a Mistake. The *first* Creeds were made with another view; they were contrived and did contain only the things in which Christians, as such, were instructed. But then in after-times, they were made the Means to instruct Men in the belief, and to secure the Profession, of things superadded to the Faith contained in Scripture. When the Controversy began about the famed, ὁμολογία, That was put into the Creed under the pretence of guarding the Faith taught by Christ and his Apostles, but in reality it was to introduce a Faith of Man’s Invention; a Faith which the Scriptures have not said one Word about. To me, who ac-

knowledge, and contend for the Scripture's being the one only Rule of Faith to Christians; whoever pleads that the ὁμολογία is a guard to an Essential of Faith, he must produce a Passage express and clear for ὁμολογία, and produce it in the Words of Scripture, or else he will not be able to prove it an Article of Christian Faith; much less an *Essential* Article: And he that pleads for ὁμοίωσις as an Article of Christian Faith must do the same. For neither ὁμολογία nor ὁμοίωσις are Scriptural Terms; and I could never yet be brought to think, that fallible Men cou'd declare the Mind of God in better Terms, or more expressive Words, than the inspired Writers have. Our Author goes on.

Ibid.

“ It wou'd not be a wise thing” (it can't but be remembred what our Author has said about calling any thing *wise*, but two Pages before, *viz.* It is a narrow and partial way of thinking to call any thing wise, only by its falling in with our favourite Opinion) “ It wou'd not be a wise “ thing,” says he, “ in any Church to chuse “ the shorter and more general Creeds, “ when the antient Faith is endangered by “ Heresies, and wants more explicite Pro- “ fessions to secure it.”

The way to secure the *antient* Faith, (if by that is meant the Faith which Jesus and his

Apostles taught and required) is to recommend seriously and truly the Bible to Christians, and not the Additions of I know not whom to it. The *New Testament* contains the only antient Faith. But if Men want to be instructed in refined Speculations, or are desirous to know the History of the Variations of Expression, or the real Alterations of Faith (which has in Fact been altered just as People of different Sentiments have been in Power) then indeed let him look into the more explicate Professions, pretended to be made to secure "and guard the Faith," but in reality to aggrandize some, and to tyrannize over others. But, why wou'd it not be *wise* in any Church to chuse the shorter Creeds? The Reason assign'd is, "The shorter generally a Creed is, the more obscure and ambiguous." If so, no doubt the shorter the worse. But if one may judge of Creeds by those which are now in use amongst us, I own, I think that just so much as the *Athanasian* exceeds the *Apostolical* Creed in Length and Explicitness, just so much is it more obscure, more intricate, and more hard to be understood. But be this as it will: our Author means that the "Apostles Creed contains the same Truths, *briefly wrapped up*, which the larger
" Creeds

“ Creeds express in more direct Terms.”
Upon which I cannot but observe,

1st. If the shorter Creed contains the Truths *briefly wrapped up*, which the greater Creeds express more fully and explicitly, it can be no Crime to sit down contented with the shorter, because the shorter contains *in this Sense* the whole of the larger. If it be said that a Man's Belief ought to be more explicit—I ask, by what Authority is any one required to believe every Consequence which a sagacious Person may deduce from any Principle. I suppose the Consequence to be truly drawn; yet, if a Man is required to believe in God, and to believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, it will not follow that a Man is therefore obliged to believe the Son to be, *e. g. of one Substance*, ὁμοούσιον with the Father. He indeed that sees that Consequence, may be obliged to believe it; but another Man may deny it, and may refuse assent to it till it is proved that God requires assent to such a particular Proposition. He may plead the sufficiency of his shorter Creed, for this very Reason, “ That it contains the same Truths *briefly wrapped up*, “ which the larger Creeds express in more “ direct Terms.” He will have a right to say this, even supposing the larger Creeds rightly to *unfold* the Truth; and if the larger

larger Creeds do not rightly unfold it, then he will have this Advantage, that he is free from the Errors contained in the Propositions of that larger Creed.

2dly, 'Tis denied that the short Apostolical Creed is at all more ambiguous, or obscure, either in Words or Things than the larger Creeds are. The largest and most explicit Creed, in use with us, is the *Athanasian*. Now the *Apostolical* Creed is clearer and less mysterious as to the *things* themselves; and as to the *Words*, it is less ambiguous and obscure than the *Athanasian*. For the Truth of this, the Appeal must be to our common Reader's Understandings and Judgments: And the way to examine it is, to take any Articles of the shorter Creed, the First and Second for Instance, *I believe in God, and in Jesus Christ his only Son*, and see if the larger Creed by its Explicitness, has made this Matter more clear and intelligible, or "less mysterious."

VI.

From the Nature of Creeds in general, our Author passes to what Dr. Clarke has said upon the Creed itself. The Doctor began with this Observation. *The Reason why God in the first Article is stiled the Father, is to denote that he is the original*

nal Author or Giver of Life, to all the intelligent Beings in the Universe: And this is the Sense first and principally intended in this first Article of the Creed.

P. 37.

This, says the Remarker, "is setting out
" with an Error; for Father in the first Ar-
" ticle *principally* means Father of his on-
" ly Son, and has Reference to it." If
the Reason of this be ask'd, it is answer'd,
" *Cyril and Ruffinus*, and Bishop *Pearson*
" understood it thus."

Has Dr. *Clarke* then taken no Notice of this
Sense, which *Cyril and Ruffinus*, and Bi-
shop *Pearson*, it seems, understood so well?
One wou'd think not, from the Pleas urg'd
by our Author for this; and from his taking
no Notice of what the Dr. has said. But
yet it is fit the Reader here shou'd know,
that Dr. *Clarke* tells us, "The Word, *Fa-*
" *ther*, denotes his being in a singular and
" peculiar Manner the God and Father of
" our Lord Jesus Christ."

Exposit.
P. 53.

But the Crime consists in saying that the
first and *principal* thing intended by the
Word, *Father*, was his being the Father of
all. Which way now must this Matter be ad-
justed? The Reader must judge for himself.
The Words of the *Creed* are, *I believe in*
God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Hea-
ven and Earth. Had the Words been, *I*
believe in God the Father, it is possible
then

then the meaning of *Father* might have immediately referr'd to the Son : But as it is I believe in God, *the Father Almighty*, why is *Almighty* join'd to *Father* ? Why is this Construction of the Words, if it does not relate rather to his *being the Father of all*, as he is frequently in Scripture stiled, than to his being the Father of the Son after-mentioned ? Besides, if Authority were of any weight, much more judicious Names might be produced than *Rufinus*, who think that the Words, *Father Almighty* were inserted in Opposition to the Gentiles, who imagined one God to be the God of the Sea, another of the Land, &c. - Now by inserting the Title *Father Almighty*, παντοκράτωρ, *Ruler of all things*, in opposition to them, it must mean the Almighty Father and Ruler of all, him who had the absolute Sovereignty over all.

VII.

Dr. *Clarke* proceeds to explain the Word, *Almighty*, and observes that it “ properly
 “ implies Supreme Dominion, or absolute
 “ Sovereignty—That Sovereignty by which
 “ the Son himself was sent forth to reco-
 “ ver and bring Men back to the Father,
 “ and shall again at the End, deliver up the
 “ Kingdom to God, even the Father, and
 G “ be

“ be subject himself unto him that put all
 “ things under him, that God may be
 “ all in all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 28.” The
 Charge against this is, “ ’Tis a Sense
 “ of the Creed unknown to the Antients,
 “ and for which there is no Proof in Scrip-
 “ ture : A Doctrine opposite to all Christi-
 “ an and Catholick Antiquity for the first
 “ three hundred Years and more.”

In direct Contradiction to this, if one
 can know what was the Doctrine of those
 Ages, Dr. *Clarke* has spoke the Sentiments
 of the three first Centuries. And whereas
 an Appeal is made by the Remarker to Dr.
W's Third Defence ; it is fit the World
 shou'd know, that Dr. *Clarke* did leave that
 Matter to the common Reader, being
 “ fully persuaded there was nothing in that
 “ Piece of Dr. *Waterland's* that was not al-
 “ ready fully obviated.” See his *Observa-
 tions*, p. 133. But, supposing the Doctrine
 were contrary to the Doctrine of the three
 first Centuries, (I mean that Part of the
 three which does not take in the Scrip-
 tures) I wou'd know what Authority the
 Writers of those Ages have, that they must
 determine our Assent. How come they to
 have such Authority, that whatever Conse-
 quences they drew from Scripture, must be
 the Belief of all subsequent Ages ? I will
 not presume to *flout or despise them*, be-
 cause

cause I wou'd not incur the Censure of our Author. But supposing them as great Men as you please, 'tis not a Reason to believe as they did, only because they lived when they did. How come they to know, (I speak of what is more than the Scripture says) How come they to know, and how came we to be oblig'd to believe just what they knew? If you say they argued right from the Scriptures,—Be it so: Only remember, that “ we are bound,” by your own Confession, “ in different proportion and degree, p. 93.
 “ according to the almost infinite variety of
 “ Men's Capacities, Opportunities, or outward Circumstances.” Their deductions, how true soever, are not obligatory unless *we* see them: Nor is a thing's being *known*, or “ unknown to the Antients ” any manner of Argument to us, that it is an Article of our Faith. But then,

When he asserts, that the Supreme Dominion of the Father, expressed here by the Word Almighty, παντοκράτης, has “ no
 “ Proof in Scripture; ”—I will give him one Argument which seems to me conclusive, and which is founded upon Scripture. He who alone has all Power independent and underived, cannot be said to have an equal, or one *common Dominion* with any one who has it derived and dependent. But the Father alone has all Power independent

and underived. Therefore the Father has not an equal, or a *common Dominion* with any other who has it derived and dependent.

If you want still further Proof, I add. He who *never* acts in subjection to any other Person, and to whom every other Person *always* acts in subjection, has not a Dominion *in common* with any one. But the Father *never* acts in subjection to any other Person, and every other Person *always* acts in subjection to him; therefore he has not a Dominion *in common* with any one. This Author must not Reply, “ That an Equal may act in subjection to an Equal, or even to an Inferior, as our Lord acted in subjection to *Joseph and Mary*, and washed his Disciples Feet.” For, allowing the Truth of this, ’tis nothing to the Purpose. The reasoning for the absolute Sovereignty of the Father of all, which here is made use of, is founded upon this, that *at all times, always*, and without any *one* Instance to the contrary, all Persons act in Obedience to him. ’Tis impossible to form a Notion of Supreme Sovereignty, if it be not from hence, that all Persons whatsoever pay a constant, perpetual subjection to One; and he that is vested with such Sovereignty *never* acts in subjection to any Others.

With this Argument, founded on Scripture, as well as common Sense, I pass to what

what is objected against the Exposition of the next Article, **And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.**

VIII.

I think it will be necessary upon this Head only to say thus much. If every Argument produced by Dr. *Clarke*, proves Jesus to be the *Son of God* in such a Sense as is *singular*, and *peculiar* to him, and not common to any one else, either Angel or Man, then that Argument will prove him to be the *Only Son* of God. But every Argument produced by Dr. *Clarke* does this. For no one else was *conceived* of the *Holy Ghost*, in a miraculous Manner: No one else was appointed to the Office of the *Messiah*: No one else was the *first begotten of the dead*: No one else had *all Judgment committed to him*. Therefore if our Saviour on these accounts is called the *Son of God*, on these accounts he may justly be called the *only Son* of God, if Scripture is to be regarded.

But *another* account is to be given of this Title; and that is, "That *peculiar*, that *high*,
 " that *singular* and *divine* Sonship, his being
 " begotten of the Father before the World
 " was." Be it so: Dr. *Clarke* has taken Notice of this too. But it seems, in the
 Judgment

Judgment of this Author, he has expressed it " faintly, in low and lessening Terms." Have the Scriptures expressed this Sonship of Christ in higher Terms than Dr. *Clarke* has? if they have, no doubt, it will be easy to produce the Place. But remember a Place must be produced, where the *Sonship* is spoken of; and not a Place where the word, *Son*, or *only Son*, or *only begotten*, is not so much as nam'd. The Scripture-Language is peculiarly exact in these Points, and therefore those who speak from them ought to be exact likewise.

'Tis not enough to produce *John* I. I. where the *Word* is call'd, Θεός, in order to shew, that Dr. *Clarke* has expressed the Filiation " faintly and in low Terms." For besides that Dr. *Clarke* has in Fact cited this very Place upon this very Occasion, a Place should have been produced, which speaks of our Saviour as the Son, or *Only Son* of God; and this should appear to be spoken in relation to " that high, that singular, that peculiar Sonship," which our Author mentions. If such a Place can be produced, which Dr. *Clarke* has omitted, then indeed this Author wou'd have some Pretence for Complaint. But if he can produce none, then it is ridiculous to complain that the Exposition has expressed this Matter " faintly, in low and lessening Terms," when it
has

has expressed it in as high Terms as ever the Scriptures made use of upon this Occasion.

I pass by what the Exposition, and likewise what the Remarker says about the Reason of the Name given to our Saviour, *viz.* the *Logos* or *Word*, because I think this Author needs no Answer. I shall likewise but just mention the Title *Lord*, which denotes, as the *Exposition* says, the *Right of Dominion over us, by Virtue of his having redeemed and purchased us with his Blood*. For this the Exposition quotes, *Heb.* 1. 2. *Matt.* 28. 18. *Eph.* 1. 17. 21. *1 Cor.* 15. 27. *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11. *Luke* 1. 33. *Rev.* 19. 16. The true Answer to this would have been, to have produced some Texts of Scripture which have imputed his *Right of Dominion* to something else, besides his having redeemed us with his Blood. Instead of this, this Author produces Texts which shew that our Lord *made all things*; which is quite a different thing: and then he trusts to Consequences, which he knows are denied by those against whom he argues: After this follow the Authorities of *Ruffinus* and *Cyril*, and Bishop *Bull*; as if what they say were decisive, against the clear and numerous Texts of Scripture. Every one that has any acquaintance with the Scripture may be trusted with such Reasonings.

“ But

p. 51.

“ But it stands to Sense,” says the Remarker, “ that *Lord* in this Place spoken “ of as Prior to the Incarnation, shou’d be “ understood of what was antecedent to “ it.” As if the Creed speaks of, or ever mentions *two* sorts of Dominion, one before, the other after the Incarnation ; whereas in this Place alone it styles our Saviour *Lord* ; and this alone comprehends his whole Dominion, be it what it will. *Ruffinus* may say otherwise, or may treat of the Creed in what Manner he pleases ; but his Authority is not sufficient to make a “ ruled Case, or a fixed and settled Method”, of interpreting the Creed, which must bind every one that writes after him against the Scripture, and common Sense.

IX.

As to what follows about the Holy Ghost, the Remarker has taken Pains to prove against some body, that the Holy Ghost is no *Creature*. He does not say, He dares not say, that Dr. *Clarke* has call’d the Holy Ghost a *Creature* ; but he draws this Consequence— “ Indeed no body can “ now make any doubt of his (Dr *Clarke’s*) “ making both Son and Holy Ghost *Crea- “ tures.*” Has the Dr. said so ? No. But “ no Body can make any doubt of it.”
Why ?

Why? Behold a Reason! — “ since he
 “ has *plainly* excluded, or *however drop-*
 “ *ped* the Worship of both.” Was there
 ever such a Sentence dropp’d from heated
 Zeal, or Envy, or Calumny before? He
 has PLAINLY excluded.—The Remarker
 knew of no Place where the Dr. had done
 so, either *plainly* or not. He was con-
 scious of the injustice of such an Imputati-
 on; and that which shews his Consciouf-
 ness is, he adds, or “ *however dropped* the
 “ Worship of both,” *i. e.* He has *plainly*
 excluded, or *however*, if he has not ex-
 cluded *plainly* or not *plainly*, yet he has
 said nothing about the Matter; and then the
 Consequence is drawn, that Dr. *Clarke* has
 made the Holy Ghost a *Creature*. And now
 the Man of Straw is to be beat, the Texts
 are to be canvassed, and this is called *Re-*
marks upon the Exposition. He might as
 properly have call’d this, *Remarks upon Bp.*
Tillotson’s Rule of Faith, or any other
 Book, since he allows Dr. *Clarke* says
 nothing about this whole Affair.

X.

The next Charge is, not upon what is
not said, but upon what the Doctor *has* said
 upon the *first Commandment*. Dr. *Clarke*
 had said, that the first Commandment *sup-*
 H *posed*

posed that there is but one God, one eternal, omnipresent, self-sufficient Being, who in the New Testament is set forth to us under this still more particular Character, that he is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Remarker in Opposition says, “ That the *Father* only, exclusive of “ all other Persons, is the one God, is “ known by the Light of Scriptures to be “ *false* : and is by all the antient Churches “ accounted Heresy.”

Had this Author read as carefully the New Testament as he seems to have read the antient Christian Writers, he would have seen that the New Testament, in above Three Hundred Places collected by Dr. *Clarke*, calls the Father alone, absolutely and by way of Eminence, God. It is therefore a gross Imposition upon the Reader to say, That by the *Light of Scripture it is known to be false* that the Father is the One God. Nay further ; this is so far from being *Heresy* during the *three first Ages*, that those who plead for the Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity, are ready and willing to be determined by those Writers. Not that they are obliged to stand by them, more than by any other fallible Authorities ; but these Men in fact generally did speak the Sense of Scripture upon this Subject. Afterwards indeed, it

grew fashionable to call the Scripture-Doc-
trine Heresy : but then it must be remem-
bred, that this was in Times, when it was
deemed fit and right to try to make a Creed
approach as nigh as possible to Contradiction
without falling into it ; when they dared to
contrive a “ kind of motly Religion, part
“ Pagan, and part Christian, instead of the
“ Religion of Christ ; ” when they dared
to proceed beyond and “ above what is
“ written, or what is evidently deduced
“ from it ; ” and no wonder if such “ vain
“ Wisdom proves no better than an Illusion
“ or an Infatuation to every Man that trusts
“ to it.”

p. 66.

Ibid.

XI.

The next Objection is, That Dr. *Clarke*
“ charges them that stile the blessed Virgin
“ *the Mother of God*, with being guilty of
“ a *profane Ambiguity*.” This it seems
“ reflects unhandfomly upon all the Churches
“ of Christ.” As if truly, were all the
Churches of Christ guilty of such an Ab-
surdity, they ought not to be reflected upon.
The Mother of God ! What ? the Great,
the Infinite, the Omnipresent, the Eternal
God, born ! born of a Woman ! born 1700
Years ago ! What can make an honest
Heathen’s Ears tingle, if such *profaneness* will

H 2

not ?

not? And this truly to be covered over with three or four Passages out of the Fathers! which makes it not a bit the less profane, but are only instances how much a blind Submission to their Authority may mislead unthinking Men. If you soften, *i. e.* interpret away the word *God*, you only shew the *Ambiguity* complained of: And if you plead for *Gods* being *born*, 'tis *profaneness*, and such a Blasphemy, as no honest Deist, much less a Christian can ever bear. And thus I pass to what is said upon the Two Sacraments.

XII.

As to the form of Baptism, it is administered in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Exposition says, that the meaning of these words is, “ By this Form we make solemn Profession of our Belief in the One God and “ Father of all, who is above all, *Eph. iv. 6*; “ of our Belief in the One Lord Jesus “ Christ, who is the Redeemer, the Saviour, and the Judge of all; and of our “ Belief in the One Holy Spirit of God, by “ whom God inspired the Prophets, under “ the Old Testament, and the Apostles under the New. By this Form we are baptized into the Covenant of Reconciliation

" tion with God the Almighty Father, and
 " Maker of all things: We are baptized in-
 " to the Death of Christ, in whom we have
 " Redemption through his Blood, even the
 " Forgiveness of Sins: We are baptized
 " with the washing of Regeneration, and
 " renewing of the Holy Ghost, which God
 " our Saviour, as St. *Paul* expresses it, hath
 " shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ
 " our Saviour — By this Form we dedicate
 " our selves solemnly to the Service and
 " Worship of God our Father who created
 " us: To the Obedience and Imitation of
 " Christ the Son of God who redeemed us;
 " and to the Direction and Guidance of the
 " Holy Spirit which sanctifies us." Thus
 far the *Exposition*, p. 293. The Remarker
 objects, " Since he owns Baptism to be de-
 " dicating our selves to the Service and
 " Worship of *One* of the Persons, why so
 " partial as not to admit the same Mean-
 " ing and Significancy of the same Rite in
 " respect of the other Two Persons joined
 " with him?" I answer, That the New
 Testament having declared the End and De-
 sign of Baptism; and not having declared
 any *design* by this Form to express a pro-
 per Coequality of the Persons; nor such a
 thing following necessarily from the words,
 or the position of them: therefore the Ex-
 positor (not being *wise* above what is writ-
 ten)

Remark,
 p 71.

ten) would not declare a Use of the Form which the New Testament knows nothing of.

Upon mentioning the Form of Baptism, the Remarker raises a Question, whether it be properer to stile the antient baptismal Creeds *Paraphrases* upon the Form of Baptism, or *Supplements* to it? Dr. *Clarke* used the former Expression; the Remarker insists upon the latter. The Fact is, Persons were originally baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Those who instructed them in Christianity, instructed them in the meaning of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and all the old Creeds that we know of, are very little else but *Paraphrases* on this Form. Nay, what is very remarkable, the same Creed is never twice repeated in the same words by any of the first Fathers; which shews that they did not confine themselves to the same words in their Creeds. The Person baptized was indeed to profess his belief of what he had been instructed in. What that was, take from *Irenæus*, and judge whether it be any thing but a *Paraphrase* on the baptismal Form. His larger Creed contains,
 “ Faith in one God, the Father Almighty, who
 “ made Heaven and Earth, and the Seas,
 “ and all things in them; and in one *Jesus*
 “ *Christ*, the Son of God, who was in-
 “ carnate for our Salvation; and in the
 “ Holy

“ Holy Ghost, who preached by the Pro-
 “ phets the Dispensations of God, and the
 “ Comings, [*viz.* of Christ,] and his Birth
 “ from a Virgin, and his Passion, and Resur-
 “ rection from the Dead, and the Assump-
 “ tion in the Flesh of the beloved Jesus
 “ Christ our Lord into Heaven, and his Ad-
 “ vent from the Heavens in the Glory of
 “ the Father to restore all things, and to
 “ raise all flesh of all Mankind ; that to
 “ Christ Jesus our Lord, and God, and Sa-
 “ viour, and King, according to the *good*
 “ *Will* of the invisible Father, every Knee
 “ should bow of things in Heaven, and
 “ things on Earth, and things under the
 “ Earth, and every Tongue should confess to
 “ him ; and he will do righteous Judgment
 “ to all ; and he will send spiritual Wick-
 “ edness, and the Angels that transgressed,
 “ and that were in Apostacy, and the impi-
 “ ous and unjust, and wicked and blas-
 “ phemous Men, into everlasting Fire ; but
 “ he will give Incorruptibility to the Just
 “ and Holy, and to those that keep his Com-
 “ mandments, and continue in his Love ;
 “ as well to those who from the beginning
 “ were so, as to those who repent, and he
 “ will obtain for them eternal Glory.”

There is *another* Creed in other words in
Irenæus ; and there are *Three* in *Tertul-*
lian ; and all of them are proper *Para-*
phrases

phrases of the baptismal Form. But if the Remarker chofes to fay they are *Supplements* to it, *i. e.* that new Articles are added, he muft allow at leaft of his own Difinction, and give me leave to fay, that thofe new Articles are *implicitly contained* in the baptismal Form, or are *briefly wrapped* up in it; and then the Difference will be only verbal.

XIII.

I proceed in the laft place to the Objections againft what is faid upon the other Sacrament. The Remarker begins with objecting againft the *Exposition* for what it has faid about the Expiation made by Chrift. *The voluntary offering of himfelf, fays Dr. Clarke, was acceptable to God, and efficacious to procure pardon to Penitents.* “ Now fupposing Chrift,” fays the Remarker, “ to be a *Creature* only, it is “ not conceiveable how he could have fuch “ a Degree of Merit — as to purchafe pardon for a whole World of Sinners.”

This Author furely conceives God to be an implacable angry Being; one moved by Paflion and Wrath, which nothing could appeafe but the Death of his Son; one who had no Bowels of Mercy and Compaffion towards a very frail and weak Generation of Creatures,

tures, whom he placed in the midst of strong Temptations, and has planted in them strong Passions and Appetites; an incensed merciless Being, out of whose Hands we were rescued as it were by the Interposition of Christ. Is this consistent with the Notions of a good and merciful Being, *good and merciful* as necessarily as *just*? God is good, and shewed his Goodness in sending *his Son into the World, that whosoever believeth on him might have everlasting Life*. To entertain any other Notions of him, is not only injurious, and contrary to Scripture, but it is thinking of him as an Enemy to his Creatures, as resolving their Perdition, till his Rage had been appeased by the Death of his Son. Had the Remarker spoke in the Scripture-Language, or had he treated of things which He can know nothing of but from the Scripture, as he should do, he would not have talked of Christ's *offering himself as a Satisfaction to divine Justice*. He could not have raised a Dispute, whether *Christ as a Creature only could have such a Degree of Merit, as thereby to purchase Pardon to a whole World of Sinners*. The Scripture no where speaks of Satisfaction made to divine Justice by our Saviour: And the artificial words of *Men* ought always (if they must be used) to be particularly defined. If by *Merit*, e. g. here is

I meant

P. 75.

Ibid.

meant *the Compliance or the voluntary Obedience to what God has promised a Reward*, the word may justly be used in this Sense. But if by that Term is meant, *such an useful Act as lays an Obligation upon any one in point of Justice to reward it*, 'twill be hard to prove from Scripture such a Notion of *Merit*. It would be well, would Divines content themselves with what the Scriptures say, and not draw imaginary Consequences, and then abuse others for not seeing what they pretend is clear.

From an unscriptural Account of the *Satisfaction* and *Merit* of our Saviour, this Author proceeds to a Debate about the Lord's-Supper being called a *Sacrifice*, and an *unbloody Sacrifice*, by *antient Christian Writers*. He readily allows, that Dr. Clarke has given *one* true reason of these Names: but others, it seems, have thought of more. Dr. Clarke did not say that the Reason by him assigned was the only one; and it is useless, unless it be to misguide People, and to lead them into Labyrinths, to trouble them with hard Names of hard Things, when the Scriptures are silent of both Names and Things. For where in Scripture is there any mention made of the *Oblation of the Bread and Wine made in the Lord's-Supper*? Where is it said to be a *Representation to God of the Sacrifice offered for*

us on the Cross? These are Notions indeed of some learned Men; useless to those for whom the Exposition was intended; they are not in Scripture at all, unless you'll say again, we must recur to Notions *wrapped up*, and which want to be more *explicitly unfolded*; i. e. to the Art of making every thing out of any thing, and putting off our own Hypotheses for sacred Truths.

I will not enter into the Debate about the meaning of the Sixth Chapter of *St. John*, because I know there is no End of such Disputes. Let the judicious Reader judge whether *Dr. Clarke*, or the Remarker, has best assigned the meaning of that Chapter. I own I cannot but think that the *Exposition* has given us its true meaning, when it says, that by "*eating his flesh, and drinking his blood*, our Lord meant *imbibing, digesting and practising his Doctrine*." Exposit.
p. 311. Whether these words have relation to the "Satisfaction of Christ," as the Remarker thinks, I leave to every indifferent Person to judge. But I must not pass over slightly what the Remarker has said about the Benefits which Christians receive from the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper.

XIV.

- The Uses of worthy receiving are by this
- p. 82. Author said to be, " an uniting us to Christ,
 " which Moral Virtue alone can never do."
- Ibid. " There is a Remission of Sins by it con-
 p. 83. " veyed and sealed." There is " a salutary
 " life-giving Virtue annex'd to the Sacra-
 p. 86. " ment." " The Sacraments are *additio-*
 " *nal Improvements* upon virtuous Practi-
 " ces, and are of nearer, and more imme-
 " diate Efficacy for the uniting us to God
 p. 84, 85. " and Christ. They *supply* where Moral
 " Virtues fall short; they relieve where the
 " other cannot; they finish what the other
 " but begins, our Justification and Salvati-
 " on." I would not willingly mistake, and
 therefore I shall cite more to the same
 Purpose. Dr. Clarke had said, *That the*
Sacraments have the Nature of Means to
an End, and therefore they are never to be
compared with Moral Virtue. In Opposi-
 p. 85. tion to this, the Remarker says, " Moral
 " Virtues are rather to be considered as a
 " Means to an End, because they are pre-
 " vious Qualifications for the Sacraments,
 " and have no proper Efficacy towards pro-
 " curing Salvation, till they are improved,
 " and render'd acceptable by these Christian
 " Performances. By Moral Virtues we shall
 " never

“ never ordinarily come to Christ, nor at
 “ Heaven, nor to the Presence of God :
 “ But by the help of the Sacraments, super-
 “ added to crown and finish the other, we
 “ may arrive at Christian Perfection.” And
 again, “ Moral Virtue is but the Hand- p. 87.
 “ maid leading to the Door of Salvation,
 “ which the Use of the Sacraments at
 “ length opens, and lets us in.”

To this I answer in general, 1st, That not
 one Word of all this Doctrine is contain'd
 in the Scripture. Where is it said that the
 Sacrament of the Lord's Supper “ *unites us*
 “ *to Christ?*” Where is it said, That a
salutary life-giving Virtue is annexed to
 this Sacrament? Or, where are the Sacra-
 ments, or either of them call'd, or repre-
 sented as “ additional Improvements upon
 “ virtuous Practices.” Where are we to find
 a Place which proves, that the Sacraments
 will *supply where Moral Virtue falls short?*
 Or that “ They finish what the other be-
 “ gins only.” Did our Saviour or his A-
 postles ever treat Virtue in this manner?
 Did they ever in any one Instance declare,
 that “ Moral Virtues have no proper Ef-
 “ ficacy towards procuring Salvation,” and
 that they “ cou'd only lead to the Door of
 “ Salvation, which the use of the Sacra-
 “ ments must open and let us in?

It

2. It is not sufficient to cite a Text or two, which contain some general Declarations about either Baptism, or the eating of the Flesh of Christ; since these must always be understood with proper Limitations: Nor would they answer the design of this Author, even were they clearer than they are; since the Sacraments never are declared to be "Supplements where Moral Virtues fall short;" or to be designed to be "perfective of them." The *Expositor* pleads for a Compliance with the Command of our Lord. And this he does like one who made the Scriptures the Rule of Truth: He considered the Ends of the Sacraments, and urged the Obligation from the Ends mentioned in Scripture. But then He could not say that "Moral Virtues can be of no Use or Benefit without this Sacrament" [of the Lord's-Supper] as our Remarker says, unless he had gone beyond the Rule of *Scripture*, which never says so, or the Rule of the *Catechism*, which intimates no such thing. Again,

When it is said, that "Moral Virtues have no Efficacy towards procuring Salvation, till they are rendered acceptable by these Christian Performances;" He means that Moral Virtue in a Christian signifies nothing towards procuring Salvation without the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper.

p. 280 —
282.

p. 88.

per. Now it is an universal Rule of Reason, as well as Revelation, that God *will have Mercy rather than Sacrifice.*

Is that then of no *Use*, or *Benefit*, or *Efficacy*, without positive Institutions, which when compared to positive Institutions, these are treated as mere Nothings, as things not *required* at all? See how the Prophets have treated the whole *Mosaic* Dispensation, when compared with *doing justly, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.* The Principles laid down by the Prophets of old, and confirmed by our Saviour himself in his Approbation of the Maxim, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*, are directly contradictory to those which the Remarker insists on. He tells us, "there may be *greater Excellency*, and *more* " *real Virtue* in obeying *positive* Precepts " than in any Moral Virtue." The Prophets on the contrary tell us — *To what purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? — I delight not in the blood of Bullocks — When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your Hands to tread my Courts? &c.* How easy would it have been to have replied to *Isaiah*, or to our Saviour, upon this Author's Principle, That Obedience to a positive Institution " is at " once an Exercise of Obedience to the Law, " and of Faith, of Worship, and of Repen-
" tance ; "

Remark,
p. 86.

“ tance :” That therefore, “ Obedience to
 “ positive Institutions is a higher Act of
 “ Love of God than any Moral Virtue.”
 The Prophet certainly thought and acted
 upon a different Principle, when having
 treated as it were with Contempt the posi-
 tive Institutions of the Law, He adds Moral
 Virtues as the things which would render
 them acceptable to God — *Wash ye, make ye
 clean, put away the evil of your doings
 from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn
 to do well, seek judgment, relieve the op-
 pressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the
 widow, Isaiah i. 16, 17.* When St. James
 in like manner tells us, wherein *pure Reli-
 gion and undefiled before God and the Fa-
 ther consists* — He puts it upon Moral
 Actions, *to visit the fatherless and widows
 in their afflictions, and to keep himself un-
 spotted from the world, Chap. i. 27.* Have
 Moral Virtues then “ an Efficacy towards
 “ procuring Salvation,” without “ their
 “ being made acceptable by the Sacraments?”
 I answer, Yes. They are *in themselves* ac-
 ceptable to God; and a holy, good and
 just Being cannot but approve the Man that
 is governed by them. They want nothing
 to “ make them acceptable,” nor can any
 thing make them more acceptable than they
 are. They are already *Perfection*; the ex-
 act Imitation of God himself; and therefore
 need

need no aid to “*relieve*” them, nor any thing to “*improve*” them. And that which shews the Efficacy of Moral Virtue beyond dispute, is what St. *Paul* says, *Rom. ii. 25, 26*, *Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the Law; but if thou be a breaker of the Law, thy Circumcision is made Uncircumcision. Therefore if the Uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the Law, shall not his Uncircumcision be counted for Circumcision.* “*Positive Institutions profit, if thou keep the Law: they are good*” means to make Men virtuous, and consequently are profitable: but if Men are not morally good, positive Institutions signify nothing. Therefore if they who never had the Benefit of any positive Institutions are virtuous, or *keep the Righteousness of the Law*, shall not their want of these Institutions be counted to them as if they had them?” Which way is this reasoning of St. *Paul* to be made consistent with what our Author tells us, that “*by Moral Virtues we shall never ordinarily come to Christ, nor at Heaven, nor to the Presence of God?*” Or that these positive Institutions “*supply where Moral Virtues fall short?*” But,

3. As there are positive Institutions appointed by our Saviour, these are so far from being "perfective of Virtue," that they are nothing but certain *Means to that End*; Means to Virtue, and not on the contrary Virtue a Means to them. What is *Baptism*, but only the *dying to Christ*, and a *Resurrection to a new Life*, in a Figure? And, does not St. *Peter* treat it as a very low thing in itself, when he says, *the Baptism that saves, is not the putting away the filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, i. e. the living after the dictates of *Moral Virtue* is that which saves us, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21.

As to the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, there are but two Ends mentioned of it in the *New Testament*; the one, to *do it in remembrance of Christ*: The other is, it is a symbol of Love and Friendship with one another. The Nature of the thing then in both Cases shews, that this Sacrament is a *Means* to Virtue among the Disciples of Christ, and not an "Improvement upon Virtue;" it is a wise Means to make Men grow habitual in Morality; but not of "nearer and more immediate Efficacy than Virtue to unite us to God." I add,

4. That

4. That nothing *can* have a more proper and immediate Efficacy, to make us acceptable to God, than Moral Virtue. For what is it can make a reasonable Creature acceptable to God, but the imitation of God; the acting reasonably, and suitably to those Powers which we have? And, what is all Religion, but the doing what is fit and right for reasonable Creatures to do, from a Sense of the Being of God? Archbishop *Tillotson* therefore very justly said, “ The *ritual* and *instrumental* Parts of Religion, “ and all Laws and Duties concerning “ *them*, are of *less* Value and Esteem with “ God than those that are of a *Moral Na-* “ *ture*—And if we consider the Matter well, “ we shall see the Reason to be very plain; “ because *Natural* and *Moral* Duties are “ approved of God *for themselves*, and for “ their *own* sake, upon account of their “ *own natural* and *intrinsical* Goodness; “ but the *ritual* and *instrumental* Parts of “ Religion are only pleasing to God *in* “ *order to these*, and *so far* as they tend to “ beget and promote them in us.” Serm. Vol. 4. Ser. 2.

If therefore Moral Virtue is approved on its *own* account, and the instrumental Parts of Religion, only *in order* to this, it must be absurd to call positive Precepts “ Chri-

"stian Perfection," or to give the Preference to These before That.

When this Author began to speak about the *Benefits* of *worthy receiving* the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, and had said, that "it goes far beyond Virtue, uniting us
"to Christ, which Moral Virtue alone could
"never do," which, as I have already observed, is no Scriptural Doctrine concerning the Lord's-Supper, He says,

p. 82.

"I wish the Author (Dr. *Clarke*) had
"spoken a little more plainly of the divine
"Graces going along with the worthy Re-
"ception of the Holy Communion." What
is it he would have had more than the *Ex-
position* has said, unless he would have had
the Doctor talk enthusiastically? The worthy
Receiver can receive no Benefits but what
must be of a religious Nature; He encreases
his Faith, his Hope, his Charity, and strength-
ens himself in them by a constant having
upon his Mind the Motives to them. What
particular Graces the Scriptures have pro-
mised to the Sacrament of the Lord's-Sup-
per, it would be worth our Author's Pains
distinctly to acquaint the World with. What
are the Graces which descend, or which are
promised to worthy Communicants? If he
says, that "a real Remission of Sins is
"conveyed and sealed to the worthy Re-
"ceiver,"

ibid.

“ receiver,” it will be asked, How this *Conveyance* and *Seal* appears to be promised more upon this particular Occasion, than upon any Act of Obedience to Christ’s Moral Laws? Or in particular, how the Promise of it appears more to *worthy receiving*, than it does to *forgiving our Brother* his trespasses? He seems to me, I own, to speak as if to this Sacrament were annexed certain particular Effects, which were produced not as religious and moral Effects are produced, in a natural, ordinary and intelligible manner, but in a mysterious, unintelligible way, of which the Scriptures are entirely silent.

He adds, “ that Moral Virtues can be of p. 88.
 “ no use or Benefit without this Sacrament,
 “ nor in any Degree equivalents for the want
 “ of it.” Dr. *Clarke* had said, That *this* p. 282.
and all other positive Institutions *have the*
Nature only of means to an end; *and that*
therefore they are never to be compared
with Moral Virtues, nor can they be of
any use or benefit without them, nor can be
in any degree equivalent for the want of
them.

Positive Institutions can oblige us only in virtue of a divine Command: nor is it possible that they can contain “ a salutary
 “ Life-

“ Life-giving Virtue,” more than Morality does, unless this Virtue is specially annexed to them. Morality is as much a divine Command as any positive Institution can be. The Law of Nature is the Law of God, as much as any positive Law is or can be: and there is required as strict Obedience to it, as to any other Law of God whatever. It is a *harder* Law to obey, than the positive Law of the Sacraments is; and if the Reward be proportionable to the Difficulty of the Obedience required, as is reasonably to be expected, then the *Life-giving Virtue* is much more certainly annexed to an Obedience which is contrary to all our Affections and Inclinations, and which must conquer Ten Thousand Temptations, than it is to such external Acts as require no difficulty or trouble at all. When therefore our Author says, “ That Moral Virtues can be of “ no use or benefit without this Sacrament,” *viz.* of the Lord’s-Supper, since the Reason of the Thing is on the other Side of the Question, I must call upon him for a very express and clear Proof of this Assertion. I admit that God has required Obedience to the positive Institution of the Sacrament, as well as to the Law of Nature: But then that the positive Institution is designed as a “ *Supplement*”

"*plement*" to the other, or as an "Im-
 "provement upon Morality," is no where
 said, that I know of, by our Saviour, or by
 his Apostles. I doubt the "Comment of
 "Antiquity" must here be brought in for
 aid to a Doctrine that the Scriptures are not
 only silent upon, but teach us the direct
 reverse of, when they bid us in order to Sal-
 vation, *keep the Commandments*.

"But," says he, "if there must be a
 "Distinction made, then let one be called
 "*Moral Virtue*, and the other *Christian*
 "*Perfection*, and let any Man judge which
 "should have the Preference." As if the
 giving a *Name* would alter the *Thing*, and
 make it different from what it is in itself!
 What if I were to say, let Obedience to the
 Command which enjoins the Sacraments be
 called *Christian Obedience*, and let the Obe-
 dience which is paid to Morality in Con-
 sequence of our Saviour's Commands, be
 called "*Christian Perfection*, and let any
 "one judge which should have the Prefe-
 "rence." Is this an Argument which our
 Author would submit to? And yet, if the
 Rule of Truth be to determine this Point,
 Obedience to *Moral Virtues* has a much
 better Claim to the Title of *Perfection*,
 than Obedience to any positive Institutions
 whatever.

p. 87.

He

Ibid.

He argues still, " that Obedience to positive Institutions is an Exercise of Love, [the Love of God, which is the first and great Commandment] and it is sometimes the noblest and best exercise of it, shewing the greater Affection and prompter Resignation to the Divine Will. He is a proud and sawcy Servant, that will never obey his Master, but where he sees the Reason of the Command. It is Reason enough for obeying, to every modest and humble Servant, that his Lord, so much wiser than he, and to whom he owes all his Service, has commanded it."

The Reader is from hence to imagine, that our Saviour has required an implicit blind Resignation to his Will, in the Institution of his Sacraments: That 'tis Pride and Sawciness not to obey, where we see no Reason of the Command, and that it is enough to modest Servants to be commanded. But is this the Case in debate? Our Lord has in Fact given us the Reason of his Commands: And if *Pride* and *Sawciness* is concern'd in this Case, it is when proud and sawcy Fellow-Servants require submission, not to the Reasons of the Command which their Master assigns, but to their own *Reason*, to what
they

they will have to be the Reason of their Master's Command, and which he never gave. The Reasons of the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper are expressly assign'd in Scripture: Nor do I know one single Instance, where our Saviour requires Obedience without an apparent *Reason of his Command*. I must therefore again, as I have often already, call upon this Author to produce an Instance where our Saviour has treated his Servants in this manner: Where he has required Obedience, to any thing, only because he commanded it. To represent our Lord acting in this manner, when he has never acted thus, is a real Injury to his Character; and whatever "proud and sawcy Servants" may imagine, He never did require such Affection, nor such a blind Resignation to his Will.

I wou'd not by this, no more than Dr. Clarke would, be thought to lessen or slight the positive Institutions of our Lord, or to represent them as useless or unnecessary. No; they are to be considered as what they are, and not as what they are not: Useful in their Places, and naturally conducive to the Ends for which they were appointed by our Saviour, but not as "Christian Perfection," when there is not one such Thought

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appears

appears in the whole *New Testament*, nor in the *Catechism* which Dr. Clarke took upon him to expound.

p. 91. I have now done with the *argumentative* Part of this Book ; and as to the *declamatory* part of it towards the End, against some that “ *for decency sake only cry up Virtue and Morality,*” I shall leave him to his own Conscience. Surely it is grown of late a high Crime to plead the Cause of *Morality*, that so much Pains is taken to depreciate it, and to set it off as wanting something to “ supply its Defects.” What Notions this Author has here published, I have already considered : And I think it needless to examine what he affirms, that the Scripture is the only sure and “ solid Foundation of Morality.” To tell us, that “ Natural Religion as it is called, will soon be what every Man pleases, and will shew itself in little “ else but *natural depravity,*” were it not for the Scripture, is plainly saying, that Morality is not in itself capable of Evidence ; that ’tis not founded upon the Reasons of Things, and that the Religion of Nature is not capable of being proved obligatory upon reasonable Creatures. The Man that can say this, seems not to know what Natural Religion, or its Obligations

gations are founded on ; and whilst he is ignorant of them, He may talk of Revelation as a Rule, but will scarce ever be able to apply it to the Explication of any Command or Prohibition contain'd therein.

F I N I S.

E R R A T U M.

Page 30 Line 3. from the bottom, r. Why the fallible Writers of the first and purest Ages are to be joined to the Scriptures.



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